

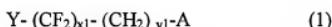
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A method of purifying a treatment target substance containing a fluorine-containing surfactant and water which comprises removing at least part of the fluorine-containing surfactant from said treatment target substance by contacting said treatment target substance with a substance [A]B comprising carbon dioxide,

wherein said substance [A]B is a gas under standard conditions (10^5 Pa, 0 °C),
said fluorine-containing surfactant is an ether oxygen-free anionic compound represented by the general formula (1):



wherein Y represents H or F, x1 represents an integer of 4 to 13, y1 represents an integer of 0 to 3 and A represents $-SO_3M$ or $-COOM$ (in which M represents H, NH₄, Li, Na or K) , or an ether oxygen-containing anionic compound represented by the general formula (2):



wherein x2 represents an integer of 1 to 5, y2 represents an integer of 0 to 10, X represents F or CF₃ and A represents $-SO_3M$ — SO_3M or $-COOM$ (in which M represents H, NH₄, Li, Na or K).

2. (canceled).
3. (canceled).
4. (canceled).

5. (previously presented): The method of purifying the treatment target substance according to claim 1, wherein said removing is carried out at a temperature not lower than 20 °C and at a pressure of not lower than 4 MPa.

6. (previously presented): The method of purifying the treatment target substance according to claim 1, wherein said removing is carried out at a temperature not lower than the critical temperature of carbon dioxide and at a pressure not lower than the critical pressure of carbon dioxide.

7. (canceled).

8. (previously presented): The method of purifying the treatment target substance according to claim 1, wherein the treatment target substance comprises (i) water and (ii) a nonwater component other than said water (i) containing the fluorine-containing surfactant, said nonwater component (ii) further contains a polymer or contains no polymer, said water (i) is in an amount of more than 0.1 part by mass per 100 parts by mass of said nonwater component (ii).

9. (previously presented): The method of purifying the treatment target substance according to claim 1, wherein the treatment target substance is an aqueous dispersion comprising a polymer and water.

10. (previously presented): The method of purifying the treatment target substance according to claim 1, wherein the treatment target substance is an aqueous nondispersion containing a polymer and water or a wet powder containing a polymer and water.

11. (previously presented): The method of purifying the treatment target 30 substance according to claim 8, wherein the polymer is a fluoropolymer.

12. (original): The method of purifying the treatment target substance according to claim 11, wherein the fluoropolymer is a polytetrafluoroethylene polymer.

13. (previously presented): The method of purifying the treatment target substance according to claim 1, wherein the treatment target substance further contains water, said treatment target substance substantially contains no polymer.

14. (previously presented): A method of producing an aggregate, which comprises producing an aggregate comprising a polymer using the method of purifying the treatment target substance according to claim 9.

15. (original): A method of preparing a fluorine-containing-surfactant-reduced water, which comprises preparing the fluorine-containing-surfactant-reduced water reduced in fluorine-containing surfactant content using the method of purifying the treatment target substance according to claim 13.

16. (currently amended): A method of producing an aggregate for the production of the aggregate comprising a polymer,

which comprises coagulating an aqueous dispersion containing fluorine-containing surfactant and in which a particle comprising said polymer is dispersed and removing at least part of said fluorine-containing surfactant by contacting said aqueous dispersion with a substance {A}B comprising carbon dioxide,

said substance {A}B being a gas under standard condition (10⁵ Pa, 0°C), and
wherein said polymer is a fluoropolymer.

17. (currently amended): The method of producing the aggregate according to claim 16, wherein said coagulating is carried out at a specific treatment temperature (T °C) and at a specific treatment pressure (P Pa), the ratio (T/Tc) between said specific treatment temperature (T °C) and the critical temperature (Tc °C) of the substance {A}B is not lower than 0.8, the ratio

(P/Pc) between said specific treatment pressure (P Pa) and the critical pressure (Pc Pa) of said substance-[A]B is not lower than 0.8.

18. (currently amended): The method of producing the aggregate according to claim 17, wherein the specific treatment temperature (T) is not lower than the critical temperature (Tc) of the substance-[A]B, the specific treatment pressure (P) is not lower than the critical pressure (Pc) of said substance-[A]B.

19. (canceled).

20. (previously presented): The method of producing the aggregate according to claim 16, wherein the fluoropolymer is a polytetrafluoroethylene polymer.